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Checkmating the Devil

(Original.)

A young man sat in a cafe tilting a spoon on the edge of a finger bowl. He had finished his dinner and was smoking his cigar. His face was a picture of despondency. A gentleman entered the cafe, looked about for a vacant table and seeing none, seated himself at the one occupied by the melancholy man. The stranger, dressed in a suit of black and a top hat, looked at the man and his cigar, wiped them with his napkin and lit a cigar. The young man still sat brooding.

"Pardon me," said the stranger. "You seem distressed. Perhaps I may relieve you."

There was a kindly, irresistible tone in the voice, and step by step the stranger won the young man's confidence till at last he confessed that the cause of his distress was love.

"Unrequited?" asked the other.

"No; the girl's father will not consent."

"That's bad, and she—will she not marry you without his permission?"

"No."

"H'm," said the stranger. "That's doubly bad. It seems to me that your only course is to convince the father that—"

"Oh, no one can convince him of anything. I wish I was as certain of one thing as he is of everything."

The stranger called for a bottle of wine and invited his newly made acquaintance to join him. The latter produced a card with the name George Winchell on it. The stranger glanced at it, but, whether from inadvertence or intention, failed to respond with his own card.

When the bottle was empty Winchell ordered a duplicate, and his mind being on his obdurate would be father-in-law and his tongue being loosened by the wine, he told his companion much about the old man's idiosyncrasies. One feature seemed to interest the stranger.

"He's got a picture hanging in his library of the devil playing chess with a young man for his soul. The devil looks triumphantly at the young man, on whose face is depicted despair. The chessman stand in such position that no move can possibly save him from a checkmate."

"How do you know that?" asked the stranger.

"Because it is so. Mr. Granger, the man I am talking about, has had numerous experts to look at the picture, and they all say the devil must win in four moves. I've studied it out myself with the same conclusion. Here is the board."

And, taking out an old letter and a pencil, he laid down the position of the pieces.

The stranger looked at the diagram thoughtfully for a few minutes.

"Well," asked the young man, "don't you see?"

"Yes, I see," said the other.

"I told you the devil had him cornered."

"Just as the owner of the picture has you cornered," replied the stranger, with a smile. "And now I am going to bid you good night. All the world loves a lover, and you may be assured that I love you. I wish I could help you in your affair. By the bye, could you secure me a look at the picture?"

"Certainly."

George Winchell, having obtained from his sweetheart the necessary permission, called with his newly made friend. They were ushered into the library, and while there looking at the picture its owner entered.

"Are you sure," asked the stranger, "that the young man is beaten?"

"Perfectly," said Mr. Granger.

"I doubt it."

"Don't do it! Haven't I had a dozen or more chess experts to make the matter certain?"

"I am sorry to disagree with them."

"Do you mean to tell me"—began Mr. Granger hotly, but the other interposed softly:

"I can place the pieces as they are placed in the picture and checkmate the devil in five moves."

"Do it. Do it. I say. I'll give you \$10,000 if you do it in twenty moves."

"Pardon me. I do not care to take your money."

"Then what?"

"I will tell you what I'll do. My friend Mr. Winchell seeks your consent to a union with your daughter. I'll checkmate the devil in five moves for that consent."

"He marry my daughter! Not if I know it!"

The stranger turned to leave.

"Hold on!" roared the old man. "I agree to your proposition, but when you have failed I'll kick you out of the house."

"Done," said the stranger.

A chessboard was produced and the pieces placed upon it as in the picture.

"Will you play for the devil?" asked the stranger of Mr. Granger.

"With a groan the owner of the picture sat in the required position. At the moment Rose Granger, who had been listening without, opened the door and entered. The stranger sat in the seat opposite the devil. The moves began, and in the promised number of moves the stranger had checkmated his adversary. The old man could not believe his eyes.

"Checkmated!" cried George Winchell, wild with joy.

"Checkmated!" came from Rose's soft voice, while unobserved she pressed her lover's hand.

"It can't be so!" cried the old man. "There's some mistake. Replace the men and do it again."

The stranger consented and again checkmated his adversary. Granger looked up and asked wonderingly:

"Who is your daughter, anyway?"

"My name is Paul Morphy."

FRANK ARCHIBALD.

Many a man of humane impulses who would not willingly harm a kitten, is guilty of cruelty where his own stomach is concerned. Overdriven, overworked, when what it needs is something that will digest the foods eaten and help the stomach to recuperate. Something like Kodol for Dyspepsia that is sold by Stone & Mercer.

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GOVERNOR W. M. O. DAWSON, At Court House Tonight.

Governor W. M. O. Dawson will make an address at the court house tonight at 7:30 to the people of Clarksburg and county. The address will have to do chiefly with the new tax laws that are bringing about more equal taxation in this State, and which are proving the most popular laws of the kind ever enacted by a legislative body in the history of the State. Every one should attend and hear what the Governor has to say of the new tax laws and what they are doing and will yet do for the people of West Virginia.

SUNDAY TRADING.

Markets and Fairs in Churchyards in Early England.

It may safely be asserted that from the time of the Conqueror (1066-1087) Sunday trading received much attention. In early ages markets and fairs were held on Sundays and frequently in the churchyards.

In 1305 the inhabitants of Cockermouth presented a petition to parliament, as their market was fast declining through the inhabitants of Crosthwaite dealing in corn, flour, beans, fish, at their church on Sundays and that thereby they were unable to pay their tithes to the king (Edward I.).

An order was issued for closing the church market at Crosthwaite.

At Bradford, Yorkshire, during the same reign the market was held on a Sunday, doubtless in the churchyard. The toll yielded £3 per annum.

In 1285 a statute was passed enacting that henceforth neither fairs nor markets be held in churchyards, for the honor of the church.

In 1312 a market was granted to the town of Sedgfield, Durham, to be held on a Friday, but was soon changed to Sunday.

In 1347 the archbishops of Canterbury and York delivered charges directing, among other things, that "we firmly forbid any one to keep a market in the churches, the porches and the cemeteries thereunto belonging or other holy places on the Lord's day or other holy festivals."—Notes and Queries.

BLUE PAPER.

The Process of Making It Discovered by an Accident.

"A woman," said a paper maker, "invented blue paper. It was by accident that she did it though. Before her time all paper was white."

"She was the wife of William Eastes, one of the leading paper makers of England in the eighteenth century. In passing through the paper plant one day she dropped a big blue bag into a vat of pulp. Eastes was a stern chap, so, since no one had seen the accident, Mrs. Eastes decided to say nothing about it."

"The paper in the vat, which should have been white, came out blue. The workmen were mystified. Eastes ordered. Mrs. Eastes kept quiet. The upshot was that the paper was sent to London, marked 'damaged,' to be sold for whatever it would bring."

"But the selling agent in London was shrewd. He saw that this blue tinted paper was attractive. He declared it to be a wonderful new invention, and he sold it off like hot cakes at double the white paper's price."

"Eastes soon received an order for more of the blue paper—an order that he and his men wasted several days in trying to vainly fill."

"Then Mrs. Eastes came forward and told the story of the blue cloth bag. There was no difficulty after that in making the blue paper. This paper's price remained very high, the Eastes having a monopoly in it."

Bricks.

There is no building material so durable as well made bricks. In the British museum are bricks taken from the buildings in Nineveh and Babylon which show no signs of decay or disintegration, although the ancients did not burn or bake them, but dried them in the sun. The baths of Caracalla and of Titus in Rome and the Thermae of Diocletian have endured the ravages of time far better than the stone of the Coliseum.

Equipped For Running.

"Isn't it awful," remarked Growells, looking over his gas bill for the last quarter; "isn't it surprising how gas bills run up?"

"Not so surprising," replied Kidder, "considering how many thousand feet they have."—Philadelphia Press.

His Wealth.

Magistrate—You were begging in the public streets, and yet you had fifteen shillings in your pocket. Prisoner—Yes, your worship, I may not be as industrious as some, but I'm no spend-thrift.—London Express.

Time appears long only to those who don't know how to use it.

BURROWING BEES.

They Are Not Social Insects, Like the Honey Makers.

The burrowing bees are commonly ranked with solitary insects. Certainly they are not "social," living in organized communities, like honeybees. But one might venture to call them "neighborly insects," for they love to make their cavernous hermitages in well peopled neighborhoods.

Their burrow sites are preferably upon hard, dry spots, with a bit of slope, maybe. Therein the mother will sink a shaft eight or ten inches deep and about three-eighths of an inch wide. On either side she will dig out small ovate cells, five or six in all, which she duly provisions and supplies with an egg apiece.

The burrows are about the bigness of the occupant and extend inward for a foot or so, with sundry enlargements, after the fashion of their kind, where the young are bred. In the height of the season these bee neighborhoods are the scene of a busy life. The air resounds with the hum of wings as the insects fly to and fro on parental duties bent, plumping their nurseries with pollen and honey of the flowers. But just inside each burrow gate an interesting phase of insect life goes on. Beyond the gateway, which is about the length of the bee, there rises a vestibule—a tiny expansion of the burrow—whose use soon appears. Just within the gateway, with face toward the opening, one of the housekeepers, now the male and now the female, but of the former, keeps constantly on guard. And great need there is for such sentry duty, for insect rogues and thieves besiege the doors to plunder the contents of the nurseries or infect them with parasitic eggs.—Harper's.

Nose Jewelry.

I suppose that in five years' time anybody who doesn't wear spectacles will be liable to arrest and imprisonment with or without the option of a fine. I cannot believe that all people who wear spectacles suffer from defective vision. I think that the great bulk of the people who overdo their faces with pieces of gold mounted glass do so out of vanity. They consider that it improves their appearance and tends to make them look more intellectual. You will notice that no pretty woman or handsome man ever goes about with a gold nose improver. It would, indeed, be an extraordinary thing if our oculists were to tell us that beautiful people never had defective eyesight.—Pall Mall Gazette.

Natural Varnishes.

Fluid resins or oils from several different trees are extensively used in the Philippines as varnishes. One of them, called oil of sapu, is a pale yellow liquid when fresh, but it becomes dark and viscous after contact with the air. Spread in a thin layer it dries slowly and forms a hard varnish. It is also capable of being burned in a lamp. Another natural varnish is balsa, also called oil of aptong. It is white when fresh, but darkens after exposure and makes a very tough varnish. Oil of pauao is a third variety, inferior to the others. In its drying properties. Chemical analysis has shown that all these wood oils consist entirely of hydrocarbons known as sesquiterpenes.

Turtles as Gardeners.

The peddlers with carts who supply the occupants of villas in the environs of Paris with cherries and other small fruits frequently carry for sale a few small turtles. They are purchased by the inhabitants of the villas to be placed in their gardens, where they are believed to serve as very effective aids to the gardener by preventing the ravages of the insects and other small creatures which are accustomed to do much damage to the flower beds and borders.—Youth's Companion.

Carlyle on Disraeli.

William Black, the novelist, in his reminiscences of Carlyle, reports him as saying: "There's that man Disraeli. They tell me he is a good speaker. Perhaps I do not know what a good speaker is. But I read a speech of his that he delivered in Glasgow a year or two ago, and it appeared to me the greatest jargon of nonsense that ever got into any poor creature's head."

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FRANK A. WILLISON

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